

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 9, 12 and 20 are requested to be cancelled.

Claims 1, 6, 15, 17 and 27-30 are currently being amended.

This amendment changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-6, 11, 14-19 and 21-30 are now pending in this application.

Examiner Interview

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extend by Examiner Sing in the telephone interview of December 5, 2003. Examiner Sing telephoned applicants' representative, Thomas Bilodeau, and suggested changes to the independent claims, and specifically to claim 1, to distinguish over the references of record. Applicants believe that the independent claims as currently amended incorporate the changes suggested by Examiner Sing, and thus render the independent claims allowable. The dependent claims depend from one of the independent claims and are thus likewise allowable.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14-22, 24-26, 28 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,282,275 to Gurbani et al. (hereafter "Gurbani"). Claims 3, 4 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gurbani in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,898,770 to Valentine (hereafter "Valentine"). Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gurbani in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,946,386 to Rogers et al. (hereafter "Rogers"). Claims 27 and 29

stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rogers in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,282,269 to Bowater et al. (hereafter "Bowater"). Applicants submit that these rejections are moot in light of the amendments to the claims to incorporate the suggestions of Examiner Sing, as discussed above.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

March 18, 2009

By

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